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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5437  
INFO RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0006  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 0163  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 6514  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE VIENNA AU PRIORITY 0118  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY  
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 0043

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 000381

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/18/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [UN](#) [UNMIK](#) [PGOV](#) [YI](#) [EU](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL WILL TAKE A WAIT AND SEE APPROACH WITH KOSOVO

REF: A. STATE 1087

[1](#)B. TEL AVIV 167

[1](#)C. STATE 13716

[1](#)D. STATE 15111

Classified By: Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission  
Luis Moreno, reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) On February 14, PolOff delivered demarche (ref C) to Zvi Rav-Ner, Director of the MFA Central Europe Department. Rav-Ner explained that the GOI had decided not to be in the first wave of recognition, but would instead follow the situation closely and decide what actions to take as appropriate.

[1](#)2. (C) He said Israel was well aware of the position of the U.S. and key European countries regarding quick recognition, and he pointed out that Israel has maintained strong ties with Kosovo, meeting with its leaders and providing substantial aid during the crisis in Kosovo in 1999. He also underlined that Israel recognizes the advantage of adding a moderate Muslim state to the international community.

[1](#)3. (C) However, Rav-Ner said, Israel also has good ties with Serbia, diplomatically and economically, which it has maintained for some time. The Serbs frequently tell Israel that "Kosovo is Serbia's Jerusalem." While Rav-Ner admitted that this analogy is deeply flawed, he pointed out that the GOI, in principle, is "against enforcing imposed solutions developed from the outside."

[1](#)4. (C) In a conversation with PolOff on February 6, Deputy Director of the UN Political Affairs Department Gershon Kedar (protect) said that the Foreign Minister of Russia had pressed FM Livni directly on this issue. He said Livni assured the Russian FM that Israel would not be in the first wave of countries recognizing Kosovo, but may recognize Kosovo after that depending on the situation. Hillel Newman, FM Livni's principle foreign policy advisor for Europe, told PolOff on February 14 that the Foreign Minister has been very firm in this position in meetings with the Foreign Minister of Serbia and the Prime Minister of Albania.

[1](#)5. (C) COMMENT: While Serbia's attempts to compare Kosovo with Jerusalem are not likely to gain traction with Israel, it is true that Israel does not like the idea of the international community pushing a solution that has not been agreed to by both parties-- especially one that originated with the UN. Russia has engaged directly with FM Livni on this issue, so our demarche may require follow-up from the Department. END COMMENT.

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